

BECOMING SUCCESSFUL IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grades 5-9

18-26 Minutes/16 Lessons

[CC]

This series addresses important issues and concerns that young teens are grappling with such as handling difficult emotions, dealing with crisis and coping with peer pressure. It also teaches assertiveness skills, decision-making skills, study skills and the rules of common courtesy.

Rights: Unlimited broadcast/off-air record (no tape duplication)

Lesson 1. Five Life Strategies for Successful Teens

This program profiles 5 real teens who are achieving their dreams and inspiring other teens to fulfill their goals: Liz Murray (Taking Risks) who overcame a life of living on the streets to attend Harvard University; Jesse Laslovich (Discipline) who became one of the youngest legislators ever elected in Montana; Aja Monet (Communication) tells her story of winning a National Poetry Slam Competition; Clayton Lilliard (Organization) is seen creating his own charity donating bikes to kids whose parents are in prison; and Jennifer Howitt (Setting Goals) who overcame a spinal chord injury to excel at basketball and win a gold medal at the Paralympic Games.

Lesson 2. Drama Queens and Tough Guys: Helping Teens Handle Emotions

Intense emotions are part of every teen's life. Too often, however, these emotions spill over into "dramas" with groups of kids reacting to and escalating the impact of the drama. The by-product is a ripple of emotional chaos that extends beyond the group members and can negatively affect the atmosphere of the school. Using four "real life" scenarios, the program enables viewers to recognize emotional "drama" and helps them find legitimate ways to handle intense emotions. In one scenario, news of Jenna and Kyle's break-up travels through the school via cell phones, blogs and gossip. Jenna goes ballistic as groups of friends take sides and escalate the problem. Each scenario is used to underscore teaching points and strategies for coping with strong emotions, to understand why drama often overwhelms an emotionally charged situation, and to learn "drama avoidance" skills.

Lesson 3. Coping with an Emotional Crisis

Divorce, loss of a parent's job, natural disasters, death of a loved one, harassment at school, failure in school, navigating difficult friendships – these and other crises have a profound impact on the mental and physical health of young teens and create emotional trauma most are not equipped to deal with. This program describes different types of crisis that are typical of high school students, the stages of a crisis and resources and strategies that students can use to both cope with and eventually move past the crisis.

Lesson 4. Standing Tall: Learning Assertiveness Skills

Teasing, bullying, peer pressure . . . these are all behaviors that are challenging for middle school kids – especially shy ones – to deal with. How should they respond when bullies, cliques and even friends make them feel bad or treat them disrespectfully? This powerful program helps guide middle school students on the challenging road toward learning to speak up for themselves and others. Conflict resolution expert Naomi Drew offers practical tips that students can use in developing assertiveness and standing up for themselves. A group of middle school students inspires kids with moving accounts of how they conquered their fears and stood up to the class bully, an overbearing friend, or peer pressure. Learning to employ these techniques will empower your students to overcome challenging situations that arise at home, at school and in life.

Lesson 5. Surviving Peer Pressure: You Can Do It!

For teens and pre-teens, staying true to oneself can be a tough act to pull off. This program, presented in a drama format, presents five scenarios where teens are asked to make critical decisions in typical peer pressure situations – whether to raid a liquor cabinet when the parents are not home; teasing and bullying a vulnerable kid out of sight of teachers and parents; excluding a girl from their regular lunch table; being pressured to shoplift in a local mall; and being tempted to cheat on an exam because other teens got advance copies of the test. In each scenario, the action stops at a critical juncture and students review six steps to making the right choice: listen to your inner voice; what would you do if you were alone; take a time out; imagine your parents are watching you; is it against the law; and finally, is it worth the risk?

Lesson 6. How Rude! 10 Rules of Common Courtesy

Teens deserve a school climate that is safe, respectful and friendly. This program presents strategies to teach and reinforce civility and common courtesy in and out of school. Scenarios range from classroom behavior to cyberspace etiquette, use of cell phone, interrupting, wise-cracking, public behavior and language, courtesy to teachers, and respect for people and property. Using dramatic vignettes, viewers learn to identify rude behavior and stop it. Viewers also learn strategies for interacting with teachers, parents and all adults to encourage positive, comfortable outcomes. As students become more conscious of the negative impact of rude behavior on both themselves and others, they see that using good manners demonstrates self-control and maturity. Give your middle school students a clear understanding of how treating others with kindness and respect is a source of personal power and self-esteem, as well as the right thing to do.

Lesson 7. Making Good Choices: Keys to Good Decisions

Kids today have a lot of important decisions to make. Should I drink alcohol or smoke pot? Should I cheat on a test? Should I inform on a friend? This program introduces students to the four hallmarks of good decision-making: Does it agree with what I know inside is right?; What might happen as a result?; Might it hurt future goals?; and Will it hurt me or another person? Through real-life scenarios viewers see middle school students in the throes of difficult decisions with serious consequences. Applying these new decision-making strategies empowers students to choose the right path. Strategies include talking with a trusted friend, listening to your inner voice, asking yourself what your parents would say, what might happen as a result, and what are the consequences. The program encourages students to refrain from acting on impulse but to use their head and heart when working through decisions. By applying the four hallmarks and incorporating strategies learned, students build strong, moral decision-making abilities.

Lesson 8. Developing Good Study Skills, Part One

This program includes two video's designed to instruct students on tried and true methods that will help them study more effectively and achieve higher grades. The six basic skills highlighted are: how to prioritize and manage your time; how to use the library to your best advantage; how to study using textbooks; how to take better notes; how to listen effectively; and how to take tests. The program begins by explaining several critical in-class skills, and then moves on to discuss successful techniques for studying at home. Effective test preparation is covered in depth, with strategy tips provided for multiple- choice exams and other common test formats.

Lesson 9. Developing Good Study Skills, Part Two

The final section of the video explores how to be more efficient in writing research papers and using the library or internet appropriately.

Lesson 10. Choking Game

This program exposes "the choking game" . . . a shockingly foolish and deadly activity among 9-14 year olds that has resulted in the tragic deaths of children across the country. Through interviews with children who have participated in the "game," siblings and parents of children who have died, and experts and physicians, young viewers get the straight and alarming facts about just how dangerous this "game" is. One young teen describes his personal experiences with the "game" and how his twin brother Gabriel died from it in an attempt to get high without drugs. Dr. Thomas Andrew, a medical examiner, describes what actually happens to the brain when blood flow gets cut off causing brain damage and possible death. A parent describes and details the tragic death of her son in an attempt to prevent others from the same fate. Gives young viewers information explaining the difference between healthy and dangerous risk taking.

Lesson 11. Caution: Teenager Under Construction

This fast-paced program uses humor and appealing animations to introduce middle schoolers to the many changes that accompany adolescence. Program goes beyond the physical manifestations of puberty and discusses the enormous emotional, social and developmental changes that occur. Likeable teen hosts reassure viewers of many normal aspects of early adolescence: changing relationships with friends, a new sense of independence from parents, unpredictable moments of emotional upheaval and distraction, and more. Viewers will understand and appreciate that there is no single "blueprint" for how a teen is built—what matters most is acceptance of self and others. The message is clear: adolescence is not a destination but an important milestone in a journey that lasts a lifetime.

Lesson 12. Becoming an Organized Student

This "edutaining" video introduces four young teens who lack organizational skills: Ethan stays up late and can't remember his test dates; Miranda has the messiest locker in school and misplaces homework; Lori is always late with projects and constantly loses her textbooks; and Paul may get kicked off the basketball team for consistent lateness. The pressures and expectations of school become daunting for students when their planners remain blank, homework is misplaced, previously-announced tests come as surprises, and important papers are crammed into backpacks. Program presents strategies for putting it all together; showing students how to organize for school success by using notebooks, color coding, day planners and wall calendars.

Lesson 13. Developing Self-Confidence

Do you know students who talk about themselves in negative ways? Avoid putting themselves in situations where others could judge them? Always make excuses? Don't feel they have anything special to offer? Very often, these students lack self-confidence. Using a series of dynamic vignettes and engaging animated cartoons, program examines the ins and outs of learning self confidence. By watching Carly, Ben, Alex and Maria, your students learn four key strategies for improving self-confidence and how to analyze their own behavior. The four strategies are: Stop Making Excuses, Take Reasonable Risks, Examine Your Fears, and Identify and Change Negative Self-Talk. Each strategy is carefully explained and dramatized in ways sure to inspire even the shyest middle-schooler.

Lesson 14. Power Trip: Bullying in School

Explores middle school bullying from different perspectives that students will relate to and easily understand. Your students will hear from real teens who experienced bullying first hand as well as from students who have been the aggressors. Special attention is focused on understanding the different kinds of bullying and the differences between how girls and boys bully. Cheryl Dellasega, author of "Surviving Ophelia", describes relational aggression which is typical of how girls bully. Viewers also experience a workshop led by Dr. Michael R. Carpenter, a bullying prevention trainer, who coaches young teens on how to modify behaviors to achieve peaceful outcomes. Other topics explored include the difference between bullying and teasing, when you should tell an adult about being bullied, what bystanders can do to prevent bullying and how bullied kids can "stand up, step up and speak out" to stop bullying.

Lesson 15. Connect the Dots: How School Skills Become Work Skills

Students often ask why they need to learn things that seem irrelevant to their futures in the workplace. This program helps answer that question by exploring the connection between what one learns in school and what employees do at work. Looks at a group of five basic school-to-work skills: personal self-management; creative thinking, computer literacy, communications, and reading, writing, arithmetic (basic literacy skills). Explores how school skills contribute to a person's ability to think critically and solve problems, and how mastering these skills in school help make for a successful career. Even though their careers may be a long way into the future, connecting the dots right now will give students perspective and help motivate them to tackle tough subjects.

Lesson 16. What Type of Person Am I? Personality and Careers

Based on research showing personality type as the key factor in successful career development, program helps young teens understand the six basic personality types as presented in the Holland Hexagon: Doer, Thinker, Creator, Helper, Persuader and Organizer. Teens begin to identify their interests and abilities, and see how their own personalities fit with the general types and connect to potential careers. Using real teen scenarios, viewers will learn how to identify what they're good at doing, what their interests are, and how to translate this information into career choices. Students are reassured that all the personality types are equally worthwhile and only one of several factors affecting career satisfaction.